(iii) Zam Zam water not being provided to the pilgrims; (iv) Handling of passengers; and (v) Delays of flights. All complaints received are examined and the suggestions made therein are evaluated with a view to streamlining the forthcoming Haj operations for the benefit of the pilgrims. Most of the complaints pertaining to baggage delivery and Zam Zam water have already been addressed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR 5TH MAY, 2008@

Reform agenda in higher education

*541. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the plan approved by the Union Cabinet, the Planning Commission is setting up Inter-Ministerial Working Group to work out the finer details of the reform agenda in higher education;

(b) whether all Central assistance would be linked with implementation of strong reform, aimed at restructuring higher education;

(c) if so, whether this working Group has already submitted its recommendations;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (e) In the Eleventh Plan document, the Planning Commission has, *inter-alia,* suggested that an Inter-Ministerial Group should be set up to work out a detailed reforms agenda in higher education. While no such Group has been constituted, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has initiated steps for academic reforms in higher education by addressing all the universities to urgently take up various reforms including the examination reforms doing away with annual examination by introducing semester system with continuous internal assessment, introduction of credit-based courses, regular curricula revision, credit accumulation and credit transfer system to permit mobility of students. As of now, grant of central assistance is not linked to reforms.

A Review Committee comprising eminent academics and Government representatives from Planning Commission, Finance and the Human Resource Development Ministries, has been set up to review the role of University Grants Commission and the All India Council for Technical Education, in the context of changes in higher, professional and technical education in the country and demands of a knowledge economy.

Indians employed in US

*542. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 142, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th March, 2008 and state:

(a) the source from where the figures that twelve per cent of the scientists, thirty-eight per

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@The sitting of the Rajya Sabha on Monday, the 5th May, 2008 was adjourned on account of passing away of **Kumari Nirmala Despande**, a sitting member. Answers to questions put down in the lists for that day were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, the 6th May, 2008.